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GENERAL DISCUSSION ON PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21, FOCUSING ON THE CROSS-SECTORAL COMPONENTS OF AGENDA 21 AND THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Draft decision submitted by the Chairman

Integrating environment and development in decision-making

1. The Commission, having examined the report of the Secretary-General on integrating environment and development in decision-making (E/CN.17/1995/19), noted the need for a framework at the national level for integrating economic, social and environmental issues and for bringing together sectoral plans in a more comprehensive manner. The Commission calls on Governments to continue their efforts to establish, where appropriate, national mechanisms and to develop integrated, participatory strategies for sustainable development.

2. The Commission welcomes paragraph 11 of the report and emphasizes the importance of the steps taken by the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development to assist Governments in the elaboration of national environmental and sustainable development strategies and plans and to develop frameworks in which sectoral plans can be accommodated. It urges all organizations of the United Nations system, in cooperation with Governments, to participate, as relevant, in the ongoing programme, and calls upon non-governmental organizations to contribute to this process to the fullest extent possible.

3. The Commission welcomes offers for hosting international conferences on promoting sustainable development in order to promote regional and multilateral cooperation on sustainable development. In this context, the Commission welcomes the convening of the Third Ministerial Conference, "Environment for Europe", to be held in Sofia in 1995. The Commission also welcomes the initiative of the Government of Belarus for the possible convening of an international conference of the countries with economies in transition on promoting sustainable development. The Commission encourages interested

Governments and relevant subregional, regional and other interested organizations to place, inter alia, the Pan-European Environment Action Programme for Central and Eastern Europe within the broader framework of sustainable development, taking due account of the need for the full integration of countries in transition from centrally planned to market economies, as well as all other countries, into the world economy, which is essential to sustainable development.

4. The Commission requests the organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant organizations to organize, within existing resources, regional workshops to explore, discuss and further develop methodological approaches to integration based upon, for example, work being done in environmental economics, valuation, natural resource accounting and integrated economic and environmental accounting.

5. The Commission underlines the importance of integrated environmental and economic accounting for sustainable development and encourages Governments to undertake further national activities in this area.

6. The Commission takes note of the work in integrated economic and environmental accounting being undertaken by the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat, organizations of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations and calls upon them, inter alia, to further this work, particularly with regard to promoting the implementation of national programmes and strengthening technical cooperation in this area.